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CONCLUSION

In the period which has been under review in the present study, America occupied wholly different positions in the polity of the two nations whose relations have been the subject of investigation. To England, the New World represented the sphere of opportunity in which the political, military, and commercial successes of the first half of the eighteenth century spoke promisingly of rewards for further efforts. Every English settlement in America was a center of expanding activity; every English settler dreamed of the step beyond. In accordance with this spirit, treaty concessions, in frequent instances deliberately concluded in vague terms, were no sooner secured than the lands ceded were fully taken possession of and a dispute was in progress concerning the boundaries of the transferred title. To Spain, on the other hand, under Charles III., America did not represent a goal of national ambitions. These centered not in the New World but in the Old, where the conquest of Portugal and the regaining of Gibraltar were the dearest objects of the king's desires. In the pursuit of the dream of an all-Spanish peninsula in which, as under Philip II., a Spanish king would rule the land from the Pyrenees to the straits of Gibraltar, from the Atlantic to the Mediterranean, America naturally played a very secondary rôle. The reign of the third Spanish Bourbon king saw indeed large tracts of new territory added to Spain's colonial empire, but these came rather incidentally in the train of other considerations and were not the result of any deliberate design on the part of the home government to increase Spain's American holdings. Beyond the wish to find defensible frontiers behind which he could hold what he had inherited of New World lands Charles' views of territorial expansion were confined to Europe.

On the conclusion of the Peace of Paris Spain was left the sole surviving rival of the English power in North and Central America. Within a few months of the signature of the treaty, English settlers stood on the furthestmost limits of the concessions which they had wrung from the Bourbon powers clearly ready for the next step forward. Mosquitia, Honduras Bay, West Florida, the Mississippi, constituted therefore, to the Spanish government

so many danger points where further advance either by active aggression or by peaceful penetration through contraband trade, must be guarded against. In the disputes, through the period, concerning these territories, the aim of the Spanish government was to confine within the narrowest limits the concessions which she had been obliged to make in the Treaty of Paris and to arrive at definite understandings in regard to boundary lines. These objects the British ministry consistently opposed.

Throughout the period, rumors of British exploratory operations along the Pacific coast and southward from the Lake of the Woods impelled energetic Spanish administrators like Gálvez of Mexico to push the line of Spanish claims westward and prevent the English from gaining a foothold to the west of the Spanish provinces. It was plain that if the British were successful on the Pacific coast Hispanic colonial enterprise was threatened with being hemmed in between two lines of advancing and ambitious English settlements.

English contraband activities which radiated chiefly from the British West Indies were met in the sixties and seventies of the eighteenth century on the part of Spain by a stiffening of old regulations enforcing the monopolistic theory of colonial commerce.

With the object of strengthening the military defenses, of guarding the frontiers against English advance, of pushing forward Spain's claims to lands threatened by English exploring activities and of enforcing the rules against contraband trade, the Spanish government immediately upon the close of the Seven Years' War sent a group of her ablest men to America. Having appointed these new colonial administrators, Charles III. characteristically gave his fullest confidence to their efforts. After 1766, when the new officials were securely in their offices and their reforms were well in progress, the king manifested very little fear of the result on his American dominions of a war with England. Having remedied the defects which the late war had shown to exist at Havana and Manila and placed able men in the other colonies, Charles put confidence in the new plans and refused to share his French ally's misgivings of possible ill consequences of a hostile attack.

Spain's readiness for a war with England and her confidence in the outcome of such hostilities became strikingly evident in the Falkland Island crisis of 1770. The respective claims of the two nations to these South Atlantic islands have already been discussed at length. The attempt at their settlement constituted a phase of the general interest in the exploration of the South Seas shown by all colonizing nations in the eighteenth century, but the proximity of the islands to the South American continent made any attempt at settlement upon them appear a threat to Spanish dominion in a part of the world which Spaniards regarded as peculiarly their own. Moreover, the possession by the English of a port for refreshment in the pathway of the long journey from the British Isles to the South Seas would, it was believed by the Spaniards, give encouragement and a local habitation to English exploring and contraband activities in the south Atlantic and along the Pacific shores where Spain's means of defending her American possessions were weakest. Rather than permit such a settlement Charles III. was willing to go to war and would have done so could he have secured the aid from France to which he considered himself entitled by the terms of the Family Compact. The attack on Port Egmont, though devised by one of the most energetic of the new governors sent to Spanish America, was confessedly not contrary to general orders from Madrid. Although the Spanish government officially declared that M. Bucareli had not acted in consequence of specific orders, the character of the assault made it clear to all the world that even the most enterprising governor would not have taken the responsibility involved upon himself without a firm assurance that he would have behind him the support of the home government. The terms of the declaration to which Spain was forced to agree in 1771 ostensibly left the question of the sovereignty of the Falkland Islands in the same position in which that matter had existed before M. Bucareli's expedition, but in the nature of things the ceremonial restoration of the British colony to Port Egmont strengthened the *de facto* position of the British in the islands. The possibility of further dispute was, however, removed for the rest of the century by the withdrawal of the British forces—on the ground of economy—in 1774.

The Falkland Island incident had an important effect on the relations of Spain to both France and England. Previous to the crisis of 1770, Charles III.'s government seemed unconscious of the staggering blow which the Seven Years' War had dealt to France. The Falkland episode brought disillusionment and the loss of Spain's best friend at the court of Louis XV. at the same time that it made the English ministry fully aware of the hostile sentiments which prevailed at the Spanish court. In consequence, the two years which followed Prince Masserano's declaration were years of diplomatic isolation for Spain. In these years Charles III. and his government gave their first attention to domestic affairs endeavoring to remedy an economic situation which condemned the native Spaniards to occupy a more unfavorable position in the commercial life of the Spanish peninsula than the subjects of any foreign power. The English accused the Spaniards of aiming, in their new regulations for Spanish import and export trade, particularly at the destruction of British mercantile interests and also considered that they were special objects of attack in the efforts made to put a stop to contraband trade in silver at the Spanish ports. At the close of a long controversy while the privileges of British warships in the more important Spanish European harbors were nominally considerably narrowed, the insistence of the English government on the literal interpretation of the terms of the treaty of 1767 robbed the Spanish measures of much of their effectiveness.

The privileges of British warships in the New World and the Old rested on fundamentally different bases. In continental Spain, British vessels had by treaty the right of entrance to the ports, and only their improper stay within the harbors would be questioned. In the New World, on the other hand, foreign war vessels could claim no rights of entrance except in cases of distress, and consequently controversies surrounding them bore fundamentally on the question of right of search at sea. In the case of the *Sir Edward Hawke*, which has been discussed at length above, the British government upheld, and the Spanish government virtually recognized, the contention that no pretense whatever might serve as an excuse for the search of a king's

ship once its character had been ascertained. The right of search in relation to trading vessels, however, continued through the period in question to remain in the same unsettled state in which it had been for above a century. The Spaniards made an effort in the case of the trading sloop, the *Hawke*, to settle upon some limited distance from the shore within which all trading ships could be considered as engaged in contraband traffic and subject to capture. Here, as in the case of land boundaries, England refused to consent to any definite agreement, and preferred to cling to the doctrine that on the high seas no excuse might serve as a reason for search while on the very coast of Spanish America mere presence could not be taken as evidence of contraband activities.

Towards the close of 1772, as European affairs became more threatening, Spain began to withdraw from her isolation and to return to warm relations with France, even going to the length of arming in support of her ally's Swedish policy. Through 1773 and 1774, while Europe remained an armed camp and the friendship of the Bourbon partners continued to grow stronger, disturbing incidents in Anglo-Spanish relations in America were very few in number. Both nations showed themselves sincerely desirous of avoiding complications in the New World during a period of so much uncertainty in European politics. The only controversy of any magnitude after the Falkland Island incident centered about Crab Island and this dispute is of interest chiefly from the fact that in it Spain was afforded an opportunity, such as the Falkland incident had provided, of beginning hostilities with England and that, drawing upon recent experience, she declined the opening.

The Crab Island incident marks the close of a decade in which the principal issues in the relations of England and Spain have been controversies and adjustments growing out of the Seven Years' War. As the changes effected by the Peace of Paris were for both England and Spain chiefly in the colonial sphere, so the predominating interest in the relations of the two powers in the decade succeeding the war is found in their American connections. With the last months of 1774, fresh issues, not primarily springing

from the late hostilities, come to the forefront. Spain becomes absorbed in a Moroccan war and a renewal of her disputes with Portugal, while England's attention becomes daily more fixed upon the troubles within her own colonial dominions. With the advent of these new issues as primary factors in the relations of the two nations, a new chapter in their history begins.

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